

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 327.

SATURDAY, APRIL 2, 1870.

PRICE 1½d.

THE SUEZ CANAL.

A FEW weeks ago I bathed in the Suez Canal; and this is how it came to pass. At ten o'clock on a Friday morning, the big steamer that had brought me from Calcutta, found herself moored alongside the railway jetty at Suez, right in among the new and magnificent French docks. I remember Suez in 1860, then an Arab settlement, with the Peninsular Steam Company's Office for its sole centre of civilisation—now, in 1870, full of European life and bustle, French cafés, engineering establishments, and puffing dredging-machines. Then, a dirty little fussy Arab steamer took you to and from the roaring leviathan that lay in the open roadstead—now, you are put ashore or on board at the dock-side as gently and unromantically as if at Blackwall pier, by—a flight of steps.

Ahead of the said big steamer that has been your floating home over coral reefs and fathoms deep of cold blue sea for a month past, stands, not twenty feet distant, the railway train, its track being over what, a very short time ago, was water and shifting sand-beds, among which cruel Jack Shark played his merciless tricks. Well done, M. Lesseps and your countrymen! Away with all cavils and remarks as to subsequent policy. You have changed the face of this ancient land, and have, so far as Suez and the canal are concerned, thoroughly beaten my countrymen out of the field. English capitalists have missed an opportunity—which fact they are only now beginning to realise.

All the yellow-labelled luggage is now out of the steamer, and placed in the train. A few hearty adieus to the bronzed faces watching our departure from the ship's bulwarks, and we are seated in the railway carriages. Curiosities of all sorts are piled around us: my taste shews itself in Egyptian water-jars; my neighbour's, in monkeys; that of his *vis-à-vis* in leopard skins and ostrich feathers.

These adjusted, on we start: a few fezes are bought from itinerant vendors who stand at the carriage-doors, at prices ranging from two to four shillings each. And here, I ask, who will explain

how is it that each jolly round-faced Briton thinks that by wearing a red cap with a tassel, he is at once orientalised, and quite mistakable for a grave eastern *cadi*? In about twenty minutes, after having skirted the docks, been brought up in one direction, and then inexplicably shot back with a sharp turn in another, we find ourselves fighting with the Arab porters at the head Suez station in regard to the much-vexed question of *impedimenta*. The combat over, without wounded on either side, some of our party make their way to the *Suez Hotel*, feeling safe under the ægis of a countryman's signboard. Less patriotically inclined, I, with two friends—one a worthy ship-captain, who has just left a fine tea-clipper, high and dry on a reef in the China seas; the other a Ceylon coffee-planter—wander, with a vagabond air, about the dusty roads, past the donkeys and the camels, past the pipe-stalls and the perfumery establishments, till we drop anchor at a café, primitive, much wood-work in its construction, but still essentially French. There is a protecting shade of planks over the doorway; and by all the memories of my youth and a *St Omer pensionnat*, there, to be sure, are the fat M. Pierre and the lean M. Alphonse at a little game of dominoes, quite innocent to make pass the time. And with them the dissipated *eau sucrée*, and a suspicion of absinthe. Mr Host, who is courtesy itself, does wonders; we dine admirably—two bottles of claret, five or six dainty little courses, and all for twelve francs; and as I know that fresh meat is two francs a pound in Suez, and that we have had the ostensible advantage of a real Nubian waiter all to ourselves, my readers will agree we did not suffer much in deserting the national flag.

It is now about three o'clock; the sinking sun glints in our eyes through the trellis-work, the good dinner is finished, and we have five hours before the train starts for Alexandria. Jones of the China reef says: 'Let's go visit the canal.' 'Agreed,' say Smith of Ceylon and Thompson of Calcutta.

'Mr Host, please inform us what is that column of smoke arising from the desert over there, in a

line with the French superintendent's house? It is apparently coming nearer to us.'

'That, Messieurs, is a great English steamer, which left the Mediterranean yesterday, and is now on her way to Bombay: in about half an hour she will be in the Red Sea.'

Hereat, Jones, who has been rather a disbeliever, opens his eyes. Smith remarks: 'Ah, well, we shall see!' And quoth Thompson: 'It is just possible; the question is, the permanency of the thing. And those infernal sand-storms, you know. What did Stephenson?'

'Never mind; let's have a peep.'

There is no time to go round by land, and so we make terms with an Arab boat, that is to take us across the bay, near to the opening of the canal, and on returning us safe and sound, receive three francs from our host on our account.

Half an hour and a brisk breeze bring us to a primitive landing-place, composed of rough blocks of stone cast one upon another. We ascend these; and a dreary waste of tawny sand stretches before us, while the northern wind from the Egyptian desert blows in our faces. Headed by one of the Arabs, our party wades for half an hour or so through the grit and pebbles, stopping ever and anon to pick up some fossil shell nestling alongside a broken beer-bottle. Pharaoh and Allsopp sighing over a common ruin! Here and there, a wooden shanty struggling to be a café; two or three questionable Italians loitering about—perhaps some discharged labourers from the canal-works; a scorching sun; lazy yet ferocious pariah dogs, with out-lolled tongues, snapping at the flies which swarm about them; and a sloping sand-bank rising before us, and continuing to the right and left till it loses itself in a dim perspective of fiery earth and sky. Looking seawards, our hands shading our heated brows, there lies before us the ancient port of Suez—a clear line of blue shewing where sky melts into water, and alive with craft of many nations. In the foreground, small Arab dhows flitting to and fro like swallows with whitened wings; farther on, hulks of old Turkish men-of-war or pilgrim-ships; and still farther away, till the eye loses itself in the glowing haze of the African mountains, are some of the huge monsters that form a floating link between the land of the setting and of the rising sun. *Quis separabit!*

Overhead, still the same brazen cruel sun; but hush! the waters of the canal are dabbling at our feet, and two giant seas kiss one another where we stand, and where the Egyptian hosts marched on to death. The appearance of the canal here is that of a great digging or cutting, in other words, an immense ditch in the sand half-filled with water. There is a total absence of masonry or brick-work. It is only fair, however, to remark that the undertaking is professedly incomplete at this point, and will receive subsequent attention.

What a sight for him who reflects upon the past, the present, and the future of this busy world! Here in the open sunburned desert, hardly a

vestige of humanity, or life, or vegetation around us, to walk a mile or so across a sandy plain, then a few paces up an unguarded dike, and to find stretched at one's feet, this majestic, solemn, long-dreamed-about silent highway of the nations! I am sitting by an English fireside while I pen these lines; I flee from all commercial statistics, but the fact of a canal exists; and the poetry of the undertaking as I first absorbed it, that Friday afternoon, will dwell in my memory for ever.

The sun is steadily dying out in its bath of fire, the flat-roofed Suez houses are casting deeper shadows one upon the other, and some hundred yards from us, standing clear in the orient glow, is the figure of our Arab guide—his face Mecca-ward—intent on his prayers. It is time to return. The sensation of solitude is almost oppressive, and I feel—when

'Let's have a bathe,' cries Smith, with his coat off, 'just for the fun of the thing. I'm game, if you are—only, look out for the sharks: I'm told that lots come up here, to get away from the noise of the docks.'

The unromantic incident of towels is ignored. In we go; and this is how it came to pass that I bathed in the Suez Canal.

To be, or not to be? Yes, indeed, that is the question. Is the Suez Canal to realise the hopes of the courageous men to whom its accomplishment is due? The geographical question of joining the two seas is settled beyond shadow of doubt, and settled most satisfactorily. Big ocean-steamers are passing up and down daily, as easily as on the surface of the Thames or the Clyde. Within the last fortnight, the reader may have observed that the steamer *Brasilia*, with the largest cotton cargo ever shipped from Bombay, came through in a few hours without mishap, as did also the French mail-boat *Hooghly*; the latter thus initiating the direct postal service of the Messageries Company with the East. The P. and O. Company have not yet made the attempt with any of their steamers, but will have to do so, unless they wish to be left behind in the race, at least so far as the carrying of cargo is concerned. Shippers either to or from the East will certainly favour that line which does not expose their goods to the damage caused by transshipment in Egypt; and this applies with special force to the delicate article of silk, from China and Japan. Even in regard to the question of passengers, many persons in ill-health, families, and ladies will see advantage in being spared the necessity of changing from one ship to another, and of the fatiguing railroad journey through Egypt. It must not be overlooked that the experiences of the canal since its opening have been confined to the winter or pleasant months; and it will be curious to see, later on in the year, whether the same style of internal fitting-up and equipment will answer for a passenger steamer that we will suppose is, in September, in the terrific heat of the Red Sea, and, in October, in the cold breezes of the English Channel. Another point: during the winter months, the heat in the Red Sea is not so intense as to prevent Europeans from working on board ship; but as the summer advances, it will surely be necessary for a vessel arriving from England to have relays of native firemen, &c. awaiting her at Suez in

dépôts. If the steamer be not one of an established line, how will she arrange for these? We shall also probably hear of occasional accidents in the Red Sea, owing to its difficult navigation, especially with ships whose officers are sailing there for the first time. Even the experienced commanders of the P. and O. Company, as a recent painful event shews, are not exempt from these contingencies. The effect of competition is beginning to shew itself, and already we see rates of passage reduced; and an influential firm at Marseille is despatching a regular service of magnificent steamers direct to Bombay, at very low fares. Besides this, the Austrian Lloyds have a line from Trieste; and the numerous fine cargo-boats that one sees advertised from London and Liverpool, *via* Suez Canal, will carry away a considerable quota of passengers. The haughty P. and O. Company will have to accommodate itself eventually more to the spirit of the times.

There is no doubt the commerce of the Mediterranean ports with the East will be largely benefited by the canal. Much of the cotton that has hitherto passed through English hands will go direct to Marseille, Trieste, &c.; and we shall see a considerable influx in India of small German and French commission houses. Competition there will be greater; there will be a larger trade in the fancy fabrics of the continent; profits will be smaller; markets will never run bare of stocks, for supplies will always be on the way; and, on the whole, returns will be quicker.

It is vain to express an opinion as to whether the canal will prove a *financial* success. This point I treat quite irrespective of the magnificence of the undertaking. The amount of money that it has cost is immense, and is only exactly known to those behind the scenes. The daily outlay for interest, and expenses of management, and repair, will require to be met by colossal earnings; and until there is a much larger steam-fleet than at present engaged in Eastern traffic, it is difficult to see how a sufficient income can be earned. There is no doubt, however, that, eventually, sailing-ships to India and China will be things of the past, and it is equally certain that one effect of Mr Lesseps' scheme will be irretrievably to lower the scale of freights by the long sea-route. Property held in sailing-ships will be correspondingly depreciated in value. From Bombay to Suez by steam is, say, fourteen days; through the canal, one more; and from Port Said to Liverpool, another fourteen—in all, say, thirty days, in which time the Bombay shipper knows his cotton will be lying under the sheds at Liverpool. Compare this with the uncertainty of '*via* the Cape.' A friend of mine, who commands one of the finest and fastest iron ships out of Liverpool, and who knows every inch of the ground to India, sailed from Bombay a few months ago, and, for want of a wind, was one hundred and seventy-five days before he reached home! Think of the wages, wear and tear, provisions, interest on capital, &c., all lying unproductive on the bosom of the ocean.

What will it cost to keep the canal clear? A considerable sum annually, no doubt; but there is nothing impracticable in the matter. Much exaggerated talk has gone forth about the danger of its '*silting up*.' The vegetation which is springing up on both sides in many parts will do much to diminish the effects of the drift sand. The

banks of the Sweet-water Canal have been planted with trees, and, as these grow up, it is expected that beneficial showers of rain will be attracted.

One awkward contingency, however, in connection with this, like all other canal navigation, must not be forgotten: if perchance any vessel run aground or sink in mid-channel, every ship either in front of or behind her will have to wait till the obstacle be removed.

I must now bring my reflections to a close. They are based on what I have read, what I have seen, and what I have heard people in India and Egypt, afloat and ashore, express, for and against Mr Lesseps' great work. Distances and measurements I have not referred to, as these have been so fully given in the public journals.

DEDICATIONS.

If dedications were not actually invented by a beggar, the invention for a long period served the purposes of beggary—few of its chosen victims being clever enough or close-fisted enough to return the compliment with an epigram, after the example of Landgrave Maurice. Some covetous writers even sought to make more than the ordinary profit out of the custom, like the Italian physician who not only dedicated each book of his Commentaries upon Hippocrates to a different individual, but managed to please another patron by inscribing the index to him; or like Fuller, the Church historian, who thought to float his great work the easier by buoying it with a dozen dedications and half a hundred friendly inscriptions. Mademoiselle Scudery tells of an author who drew up three dedicatory epistles for a work he was about to print, deciding which to use when he had ascertained who would pay best for the honour. One Rangouze hit upon a very ingenious dodge of extracting pistoles from folks desirous of literary compliments: he wrote a series of panegyric letters addressed to different people, and printed them without any pagination, so that they could be bound up in any order. He thus contrived that each person to whom he presented a copy saw his own name in the place of honour. Rangouze was not, however, the only rogue who lived thus upon mankind's love of flattery. A somewhat similar method was adopted by certain swindlers, exposed in Dekker's *O-per-se*—which, by the way, was dedicated to 'The Glory of Middlesex, the honourable and worthily deserving Gentlemen, His Majesty's Justices of the Peace, in that populous county.' Dekker says these vagabonds, who worked in couples, called themselves '*Falconers*,' and went about their work in the following manner.

Having scraped together sundry parings of wit, and patched up a book between them, they got it printed. Then they obtained a list of all the gentlemen of the county they intended to favour with a visit, and printed off as many epistles dedicatory as they had names—the epistles being exactly alike, saving in the titles of the patrons. Hiring a couple of hacks, and taking care to be

'civilly suited, that they might carry about them some badge of a scholar,' they set out on their travels. When they came to a great house, they alighted at the gate, knocked, and were let in. One, passing for the serving-man, leads the horses into the court-yard, while his comrade walks boldly up to the Hall, and asks for the master of it, saying he is a gentleman come down from London on private business of importance. Admitted to the gentleman's presence, the rogue addresses him something after this style: 'Sir, I am a poor scholar, and the report of your virtues hath drawn me hither, venturesomely bold to fix your worthy name as a patronage to a poor short discourse, which here I dedicate, out of my love, to your noble and eternal memory.' A book is produced, bound in vellum, with gilt fillets, and streamers of fourpenny silk dangling at the four corners. The victim examines it; and finding his name heading an epistle 'just as long as a henchman's grace before dinner,' cannot but thank his visitor for his love and labour in coming so far to pay him such a compliment. Then remembering 'that patrons and godfathers must pay scot and lot,' he unburdens his purse to the tune of four or five angels, inviting him to stay breakfast, or, if the sun-dial points towards eleven, to tarry dinner. The invitation is declined with thanks and legs and kissing of hands, and the lucky rascal hastens to join his friend, who asks, 'Straws or not?' 'Straws' is the reply; and they hurry off as fast as their poor nags will take them to the nearest tavern, to divide the spoil, and decide what covert shall be drawn next. 'If a gentleman, seeing one of these books dedicated only to his name, suspect it to be a bastard, that hath more fathers besides himself, and to try that, does defer the presenter for a day or two, sending in the meantime into Paul's Churchyard amongst the stationers, to inquire if any such work be come forth, and if they cannot tell, then to step to the printer's—yet have the Falconers a trick to go beyond such hawks too, for all they fly so high, and that is this: the books lie all at the printer's, but not one line of an epistle to any of them. If, then, the spy asks why they have no dedication, Monsieur Printer tells him the author would not venture to add any to them, saving only to that which was given to his master, until it was known whether he would accept it or no. This satisfies the patron, this fetches the money from him, and this cozens five hundred besides.' Others made themselves independent of the printer, by carrying alphabets with them, by which they could print in any patron's name as it was required. Such travelling dedication-mongers, Dekker assures us, travelled up and down most of the English shires when James I. was king. The existence of such a species of roguery, shews what a fine field there was in those days for more legitimate exponents of the art of dedication. Nor can it be said that they neglected it, although they left it to the authors of a succeeding age to find out how much flattery a patron could bear.

The writers of the Restoration period anticipating Johnson's dictum, that the purpose of a dedication is flattery, vied with each other in adulatory extravagance. They seem to have thought lying and loyalty synonymous things—probably they were so with many of them—and it is hard to say whether these productions are most remarkable for fulsomeness or falsehood. Sir George Wharton,

inscribing an almanac to the king, seizes the occasion to present the world with the following pen-and-ink portrait of His Majesty Charles II.:

Some Princes have been surnamed Red, some Black,
Some Tall, some Crooked (as well in Mind as) Back;
Some for their Learning, some for Valour stand,
Admired by this Learned and Warlike Land;
Our Gracious King's both Black and Tall of Stature,
Learned, Valiant, Wise, and Liberal too by Nature,
But that adorns Him more than all the Rest,
Is Mercy in His most Religious Breast;
Which mixed with Justice, makes Him thus to shine,
The increasing Glory of the Regal line!

While Charles was lauded in such imaginative and ill-measured strains, the soiled doves nestling in his most religious breast came in for their share of panegyric. Duffet boldly claims the merit of being the first to tell Nell Gwynne in print that next to her beauty her virtues are the greatest miracle of the age; and naughty Aphra Behn thus apostrophises the same frail fair one: 'Besides all the charms and attractions and power of your sex, you have beauties peculiar to yourself—an eternal sweetness, youth, and air, which never dwelt in any face but yours. You never appear but you glad the hearts of all that have the happy fortune to see you, as if you were made on purpose to put the whole world into good humour.' Crowne dedicated his *Destruction of Jerusalem* to the Duchess of Portsmouth, declaring he placed her image at the Temple gate to render the building sacred—a phrase savouring somewhat of blasphemy, but characteristic enough of one who could tell the Merry Monarch—

You, sir, such blessings to the world dispense,
We scarce perceive the use of Providence!

One can smile at the pitiful sycophancy of a Crowne, but to see genius grovelling in the dirt is grievous indeed. How could Otway ignobly stoop to address the worst of the vile crew of court dames in such terms as these? 'Nature and Fortune were certainly in league when you were born; and as the first took care to give you beauty enough to enslave the hearts of all the world, so the other resolved to do its merit justice, that none but a monarch fit to rule the world should e'er possess it. The young prince you have given him, by his virtues declares the mighty stock he came from; and as you have taken all the pious care of a dear mother and a prudent guardian to give him a noble and generous education, may it succeed according to his merits and your wishes.' *Venice Preserved* deserved a worthier dedicatee. It is true, alas, that Otway might plead the example of a greater than he. Dryden was a worse offender, making, as Johnson says, flattery too cheap. 'In the meanness and servility of hyperbolic adulation, I know not whether, since the days in which the Roman emperors were deified, he has ever been equalled, except by Aphra Behn in an address to Eleanor Gwynne. When once he has undertaken the task of praise, he no longer retains shame in himself, nor supposes it in his patron. He had all the forms of excellence, intellectual and moral, combined in his mind, with endless variation; and when he had scattered on the hero of the day the golden shower of wit and virtue, he had ready for him whom he wished to court on the morrow, new wit and new virtue with another stamp. Of this kind of meanness he

never seems to decline the practice or lament the necessity; he considers the great as entitled to encomiastic homage, and brings praise rather as a tribute than a gift, more delighted with the fertility of his invention, than mortified by the prostitution of his judgment.

Dryden, however, has been almost equalled in later times. Young, although as a satirist he sneered at dedications washing Ethiops white, did not let that deter him from out-heroding Herod as a dedicator. In inscribing his *Last Day* to the queen, after praising her for the victories achieved by Marlborough, he goes on to declare he is better pleased still by seeing her rise from this lower world, soaring above the clouds, passing the first and second heavens, and leaving the fixed stars behind her: nor will he lose her there, but keep her in view through the boundless spaces on the other side of creation, till he behold the heaven of heavens open, and angels receiving and conveying her still onward beyond the stretch of his imagination. Dedicating another poem to the Countess of Salisbury, the reverend poet says: 'To behold a person only virtuous, stirs in us a prudent regret; to behold a person only amiable to the sight, warms us with a religious indignation; but to turn our eyes to a Countess of Salisbury, gives us pleasure and improvement: it works a sort of miracle; occasions the bias of our nature to fall off from sin, and makes our very senses and affections converts to our religion, and promoters of our duty.' Young's tragedy, the *Revenge*, was dedicated 'to the scorn and wonder of his days,' the infamous Duke of Wharton; but the dedication, like the others quoted above, was suppressed by the poet when it had answered its purpose. Young was a great moral teacher, but certainly his morality did not begin at home. The loaves and fishes were ever in his thoughts, and he strove to gain them by slavishly flattering the dispensers thereof—invariably choosing 'great or growing names' when he wanted pegs for flattering rhymes. Our so-called Augustan age was an age of patronage, in which solid pudding awaited the man who flattered wisely and well, and was shrewd enough to guess where a spurious immortality would gladly be bought.

A liberal purchaser of dedicatory fame was Lord Halifax, who, starting as a poet himself, ended in becoming the general patron of his time. With the notable exceptions of Swift and Pope, almost every author of his day sought the favour of Halifax; and as he paid handsomely for the food he loved, no wonder his appetite was indulged by those who hoped to win place or pension by the easy expenditure of panegyric. The rate at which he paid may be judged by the fact, that the author of a tragedy called *Phædra* lost a place of three hundred a year from allowing caprice or pride to prevent his waiting upon Halifax after he had dedicated his play to him. Authors must often have been puzzled what great man to select; they might have taken a hint from Sir Balthazar Gerbier, whose little book, *Counsel to Builders*, was dedicated to almost all the men of any condition in England, so that the dedications exceeded in bulk the work itself; and, says Pepys, 'both it and them not worth a farthing.'

In 1756, the *Connoisseur* exclaims at authors injudiciously affronting their patrons by the flat and fulsome insipidity of their dedications: 'The humble dedicator loads his great man with virtues totally foreign to his nature and disposition, which

sit as awkwardly upon him as lace or embroidery on a chimney-sweeper; and so overwhelms him with the huge mass of learning, with which he graciously dubs him a scholar, that he makes as ridiculous a figure as the ass in the *Dunciad*. After having thus bepraised his patron, till the new Mæcenas is heartily ashamed of himself, he wonders that no notice is taken of so pompous a eulogium, and that a dedication should be as mere a drug as a sermon.' The *Rambler*, too, waxes indignant on the subject: 'How few of these initial panegyrics had appeared, if the author had been obliged first to find a man of virtue, then to distinguish the distinct species and degrees of his desert, and at last to pay him only the honours which he might justly claim. It is much easier to learn the names of the last man whom chance has exalted to wealth and power; to obtain, by the intervention of some of his domestics, the privilege of addressing him; or, in confidence of the general acceptance of flattery, to venture on an address without any previous solicitation; and after heaping upon him all the virtues to which philosophy has assigned a name, inform him how much more might be truly said, did not the fear of giving pain to his modesty, repress the raptures of wonder and the zeal of veneration. Nothing has so much degraded literature from its natural rank as the practice of indecent and promiscuous dedications; for what credit can he expect who professes himself the hireling of vanity, however profligate; and without shame or scruple celebrates the worthless, dignifies the mean, and gives to the corrupt, licentious, and oppressive, the ornaments which ought only to add grace to truth, and loveliness to innocence? Every other kind of adulation, however shameful, however mischievous, is less detestable than the crime of counterfeiting characters, and fixing the stamp of literary sanction upon the dross and refuse of the world.' Hard words, truly; but the writer knew what he was writing about, for he had himself dedicated to the royal family all round—not in his own person, it must be owned, for that the great doctor never did—exercising his panegyric powers on behalf of productions of very varied descriptions, from *Music for the German Flute*, *An Introduction to the Game of Draughts*, and a *Manual of Shorthand*, up to the posthumous works of a bishop. When he was not riding the high-horse, Johnson could excuse the use of adulation, on the ground that there was as much difference between what a man says in a dedication and what he says in a history, as between a lawyer's pleading a cause and reporting it.

Dedications are almost obsolete now, although the custom of inscribing a book to a patron or friend has found favour with the majority of great English writers. Shakspeare dedicated both his early poems to Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton. In inscribing *Venus and Adonis* to his patron, the poet promised to take advantage of all idle hours, till he honoured him with some graver labour; and when he redeemed his promise with his *Lucrece*, paid the earl the compliment of saying: 'What I have done is yours, what I have to do is yours, being part in all I have devoted yours.' The editors of Shakspeare's plays dedicated the first folio edition to the Most Noble and Incomparable Pair of Brethren, William, Earl of Pembroke, and Philip, Earl of Montgomery, who had been pleased to think something of the trifles, and shewn them and their

author much favour. In inscribing the Sonnets to their only begetter, Mr W. H., publisher Thorpe might have been more explicit, and thereby insured the owner of the mysterious initials that eternity promised by our ever-living poet, instead of merely supplying commentators with something to wrangle about. Spenser dedicated the *Faery Queen* to the Right Noble and Valorous Sir Walter Raleigh, Lord of the Stannaries, and Her Majesty's Lieutenant of the county of Cornwall. There is no trace of Bacon's meanness in his dedications. In inscribing the first series of his famous *Essays* to his brother Anthony, he affectionately declares he wishes his brother's infirmities might be transferred to him, that the queen might have the service of such an active and able mind, and he himself have an excuse for confining himself to such contemplations and studies for which he was fittest. The second series of *Essays* were dedicated to his 'loving brother,' Sir John Constable. When Bacon collected the whole together, he prefixed the name of the Duke of Buckingham to both editions—English and Latin; conceiving the last-named, being in the universal language, would last as long as books last. 'My *Insaturation*,' says he, 'I dedicated to the king; my *History of Henry VII.*, and my portions of *Natural History*, to the Prince; and these I dedicate to your Grace, being of the best fruits, that, by the good increase which God gives to my pen and labours, I could yield. God lead your Grace by the hand!'

Addison dedicated his *Travels* to Lord Somers; his opera *Rosamond* to the Duchess of Marlborough; but *Cato* he was compelled to send into the world without any dedication at all. The queen had graciously intimated she was desirous of the honour; but as he had promised the compliment elsewhere, Addison was obliged by his duty on the one hand, and his honour on the other, to get out of the dilemma by leaving his play undedicated. Congreve's unsuccessful *Double Dealer* he dedicated to Lord Halifax, who had shewn his appreciation of the *Old Bachelor* by giving the dramatist a commissionership, a place in the Pipe Office, and one in the customs worth six hundred a year. Halifax would have been better pleased to have had his name associated with Pope's *Iliad*, but the poet wanted to award the compliment for value received, and wrote his would-be patron: 'I distrust neither your will nor your memory, when it is to do good; and if ever I become troublesome or solicitous, it must not be out of expectation, but out of gratitude. It is indeed a high strain of generosity in you to think of making me easy all my life, only because I have been so happy as to divert you some few hours; but if I may have leave to add, it is because you think me no enemy to my native country, there will appear a better reason.' Pope was 'less eager for money than Halifax for praise,' and Congreve became the recipient of the compliment Halifax craved. The *Dunciad* dedication went, too, to a fellow-author, Swift. Among other names thus honoured by Pope were those of Bolingbroke, Arbuthnot, Murray, Cobham, Boyle, Bathurst, Addison, and Arabella Fermor—the lady certainly having an undeniable claim upon the *Rape of the Lock*, since she was the heroine of the poem.

Gay's inscription of his poem on *Rural Sports* led to his life-long friendship with Pope. Tom

Jones was dedicated to the Honourable George Lyttelton, by whose desire Fielding first turned his thoughts to novel-writing. His *Love in Several Masques* is addressed to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu as one whose accurate judgment had long been the glory of her own sex, and the wonder of the other, and who was a living confutation of those morose schoolmen who would confine knowledge to the male part of the species, and a shining instance of all those perfections and graces which Nature has confined to the female. Flattery from Fielding was worth having. We doubt if shrewd Lady Mary set as much value on the praises of Savage, who, dedicating a Miscellany of Poems to her, tells her: 'Since our country has been honoured with the glory of your wit, as elevated and immortal as your soul, it no longer remains a doubt whether your sex have strength of mind in proportion to their sweetness. There is something in your verses as distinguished as your air. They are strong as truth, as deep as reason, as clear as innocence, and as smooth as beauty. They contain a nameless and peculiar mixture of force and grace, which is at once so movingly serene, and so majestically lovely, that it is too amiable to appear anywhere but in your eyes and writings.'

Oliver Goldsmith was chary with his compliments, not holding with Farquhar, that books, like metals, required to be stamped with some valuable effigy before they became popularly current. Dedicating the *Deserted Village* to Sir Joshua Reynolds, he says: 'Setting interest aside, to which I never paid much attention, I must at present be indulged in my affection. The only dedication I ever made (the *Traveller*) was to my brother, because I loved him better than most other men. He is since dead; permit me to inscribe this poem to you.' Dr Johnson was the recipient of the only other compliment in this way paid by Goldsmith, when Oliver dedicated *She Stoops to Conquer* to his true-hearted friend, to shew the world that wit and piety could dwell together. Sir Walter Scott was no dedicator, although *Marmion* is notable for each canto having a long versified address to one or other of the poet's personal friends. Tom Moore was not quite so backward. His *Odes of Anacreon* were inscribed to the Prince of Wales, the *Irish Melodies* to the Marchioness of Donegal, the *Summer Fête* to Mrs Norton, the *Epicurean* to Lord John Russell, *Little's Poems* to Mr Atkinson, and *Lalla Rookh* to Rogers. Admiration for the genius of the poet of *Memory*, induced Byron to attach his name to the *Giaour*. Lord Holland's name was prefixed to the misnamed *Bride of Abydos*; Moore, as the poet of all circles and the idol of his own, came in for the *Corsair*; the tremendous mystery, *Cain*, was appropriated to 'Apollo's venal son.' The first-fruits of Byron's muse were inscribed to Lord Carlisle, by his 'affectionate kinsman,' whose affection however, did not prevent him afterwards writing:

No muse will cheer with renovating smile
The paralytic puling of Carlisle.
The puny school-boy and his early lay
Men pardon, if his follies pass away;
But who forgives the senior's ceaseless verse,
Whose hairs grow hoary as his rhymes grow worse?
What heterogeneous honours deck the peer—
Lord, rhymester, petit maitre, pamphleteer!

Childe Harold was divided between a young beauty

and an old friend; the opening canto being dedicated in verse to an eleven-year-old daughter of Lord Oxford; while the fourth canto was dedicated to one the ill-starred author had found wakeful over his sickness, kind in his sorrow, glad in his prosperity, firm in his adversity, true in counsel, and trusty in peril. Truly, Hobhouse had well earned the friendly homage. *Sardanapalus* and *Werner* were both dedicated to Goethe, in testimony of Byron's admiration for 'the first of existing writers, who has created the literature of his own country, and illustrated that of Europe.' The *Endymion* of Keats was inscribed to the memory of Chatterton, his own memory being crowned with the *Adonais* of Shelley. Leigh Hunt loyally dedicated the *Palfrey* to his youthful sovereign—

Whose zeal for healthy duties
Set on horseback half our beauties;

but when promise had blossomed into performance, a greater poet addressed her as

Revered, beloved—O you that hold
A nobler office upon earth,
Than arms, or power of brain, or birth
Could give the warrior-kings of old.

And in later and sadder days, the Laureate paid nobler homage still to the Consort of his Queen by inscribing his *Idylls of the King* to the Memory of Albert the Good, in the finest dedicatory lines ever written, beginning:

These to His Memory—since he held them dear,
Perchance as finding there unconsciously,
Some image of himself—I dedicate,
I dedicate, and consecrate with tears,
These Idylls—

and concluding with the beautiful prayer:

May all love,
His love, unseen but felt, o'ershadow Thee,
The love of all thy sons encompass Thee,
The love of all thy daughters cherish Thee,
The love of all thy people comfort Thee,
Till God's love set Thee at his side again.

Some authors, mostly very insignificant ones, have had the hardihood to go to Heaven itself for a dedicatee. The writer of a *History of Birds* inscribes his precious work 'To God! the One Eternal! the Incomprehensible! the Omnipresent! Omniscient and Almighty Creator of all things that exist! from orbs immeasurably great to the minutest points of matter: this mite is dedicated and devoted, with all possible gratitude, humiliation, and worship, and the highest adoration both of body and mind, by his most resigned, low, and humble creature.' Another airs his obtrusive piety after the following ridiculous fashion: 'To the most Sublime, most High and Mighty, most Pious, most Sacred, most Faithful, most Gracious, most Catholic, most Sincere, most Reverend, and most Righteous Majesty, Jehovah Emanuel, by indefeasible right Sovereign of the Universe, and Prince of the Kings of the Earth, Governor-general of the World, Chief Shepherd or Archbishop of Souls, Chief Justice of Final Appeal, Judge of the Last Assize, Father of Mercies, and Friend of Man. This Poem (a feeble testimony of his obligations and his hopes) is gratefully and humbly presented by His Majesty's highly favoured but very unworthy subject and servant, the Author.' Even so lately

as 1846 might be read an advertisement of 'Sacred Music dedicated to the ever Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, by her most unworthy Suppliant, W. N. Skelly; price 2s. 6d.'

GWENDOLINE'S HARVEST.

THE REAPING.

CHAPTER XXVII.—THE FIRST CROP.

FIVE years have passed away, bringing their changes to the characters of this history as they are more or less capable of change. Lord Luttrell is not much altered, and Gwendoline still less so, except as far as her personal beauty is concerned, which has not diminished, but has entered on another phase—for she is a mother. Her only child, the Honourable Spencer Mostyn, is now four years old; a splendid little fellow, who has inherited the good looks of both his parents, and, let us hope, not their vices. His father's interest in him—since there is no entail for him to cut off in his favour—is very faint. Epsom and Newmarket, with whist so short and sharp that one may lose hundreds of pounds in an hour at it, absorb my Lord's intellectual energies; while his social occupation is the pursuit (by no means under difficulties) of the fair sex. But dark-eyed Spencer is the darling of his mother, who is devoted to him; of Dr Gisborne, now an old and broken man, with no fire left save a mild glow of tenderness; and of all who know his fair frank face and winning ways. Miss Ferrier dotes upon him, and Marion and Eady are never so happy as when it is their task to amuse him; but they are not much thrown together. The two girls are a good deal with their aunt in Scotland, and visit their own home only at intervals.

Sir Guy is dead, and Bedivere Court is in the hands of Mr Aaron Melchisadeck, the money-lender, of whom the county hears with horror that since he cannot sell it at the sum the keen old baronet persuaded him to advance, he is going to live there himself. Lord Luttrell alone expresses it as his opinion that it would be a deuced convenient thing if he did.

Gwendoline administers the property of her step-children with tolerable fairness. Glen Druid is kept up as it should be, or, at all events, it has the air of being so when they and their aunt visit it; but of course there is a large surplus out of the funds left for their maintenance and education, and all this finds its way into my Lord's pocket, the seams of which have unhappily become unsewn; it has no bottom to it whatever. Up to this time, Gwendoline has assisted him to the utmost of her means, but she is not wholly wrapt up in her husband now; her child's interests have also to be considered. Of those two she is still fond—though with an ever widening difference in Spencer's favour—and also, to all appearance, of her step-children; but to the rest of the world she is hard and cold. She wears her mask no longer so closely or so continuously as heretofore, for it is not now worth her while; and Miss Ferrier has in consequence quite lost her illusions with respect to her sister-in-law; but the boy is a common tie between them still.

Supposing, indeed, it is the fact that all the world

are born bad, little Spencer is the exception that is necessary to prove the rule; or if that suggestion is unorthodox, let us suppose his two parents were the two negatives that have made him an affirmative of goodness. He would be an angel but for the possession of what his father calls 'a devil of a temper,' but which is, in fact, nothing more than a determination to stand by his rights, and (what is much rarer) by the rights of other people. He possesses a sense of justice so impartial as to be quite alarming and revolutionary. The idea which his mother secretly entertains, that Marion and Eady have got his property, and ought to be ashamed of growing up co-heiresses, has never entered his mind, nor does she ever venture to hint it to him. He has not inherited her dislike to honest Susan. He will have no one unjustly treated or misused, if he knows it, down to his sober bay pony. The only cloud upon his bright young life is that he cannot quite bring himself to love papa.

We have said that Gwendoline no longer troubled herself to deceive even Miss Ferrier, but in one respect she did endeavour to do so. Womanly pride impelled her to still strive to conceal from her that she was not quite so happy in her second marriage as she had expected to be. In this she failed; but, on the other hand, her sister-in-law did not fathom the fact that she was supremely wretched. The knowledge of her husband's unfaithfulness had come to her long ago—very soon, indeed, after their marriage; but time, while it widened that knowledge, did not heal her wounded spirit. Jealousy consumed her now, as love had done aforetime. Such delinquencies a wife may forgive, even again and again; but the forgiveness must be sought, and Lord Luttrell never dreamed of seeking it. On the first occasion of suspicion, there had been a very unedifying scene between them. Piers was too 'refined' to laugh in a lady's face, but he had expressed himself with brutal candour. He designated her scruples as 'utter nonsense,' and only adapted for the daughter of some small tradesman: her alliance with the Ferrier 'lot' had forsooth made her quite 'respectable.' Such arguments, he would have her to know, were quite out of place addressed by a woman of position to her husband. When she endeavoured to combat this view, he grew more audacious still, and passed from the general to the particular. Even if, as she represented, good society had any distinct code of morals, *he*, at all events, could not be expected to be bound by it. To suit her plans, he had remained a bachelor; but, now that he was married, he would no longer be her slave. He considered that old compact between them to be a quittance of all obligations between them beyond their mutual convenience. To be plain, they were both adventurers, who, with a common stake, had played a great game, and won it; but as to sentiment, there was nothing of that sort at all in the transaction. He would flirt just as much as he pleased.

With that curt expression of his intentions, Lord Luttrell had turned upon his heel and left her, and he had kept his word respecting them. At first, Gwendoline strove to appear contemptuously indifferent to her husband's profligacy; but the only effect of that was to afford him great relief. Then she endeavoured to make him jealous by her own course of conduct, in which she totally

failed, for two reasons. *Imprimis*, though not without passion, her affections, like those of most of her sex, were personal. She did not care for men, but only for one man; and it was difficult for her, actress though she was, even to feign otherwise. Secondly, when she had done so, and looked for an outbreak from her husband, it came only in a peal of laughter. 'My dear Lady Luttrell,' said he (for he was as polite to her in private as in public), 'you amuse me immensely; when you think to make me jealous, however, you are imputing to me an injustice. Above all things, I wish to be fair; and when I demanded for myself the most perfect freedom, I did not intend tyrannically to deny it to my wife.'

This insolent indifference wounded her more than all her wrongs. It was a cynicism that she was totally unprepared for, and against which there was no contending. Above all, she was for ever haunted with the sense of the tremendous *unknown* price which she had paid to gain this man, who had so soon grown weary of her. She could not help expecting him, although it was unknown, to take it into account. Neither repentance nor remorse, but a dull resentful rage, took possession of her when she reflected upon this. Had she endowed him with money, obtained by such means as *that*, for him to make her wretched! For she was at once the minister and the victim to his profligacy. She had heard of a place of future punishment reserved for those who did such deeds as she had done, but she believed in it now less than ever, for was she not receiving her punishment already at the hands of this ungrateful, iron-hearted man? Then she would remind herself of her folly in crediting him with the knowledge of the sacrifice she had made of mental peace, and even of the material rest such as the meanest creature enjoyed, for his dear sake, and then once more would upbraid him again. It was only by degrees that she had been driven to these bitter communings with her own heart. She had not spared to express her reproaches; she had even condescended to appeal to his pity. Scenes of violence, of scorn, of reckless recrimination, and also of passionate entreaty, had taken place between them before it had come to this pass, and all this, it must be remembered, while the pair were outwardly upon good terms with one another, in the smooth respectable round of county life, or among the clamorous vanities of the town. She bore the wretchedness of her lot bravely enough before the world, just as in the river-bed some riven-breasted rock stands with its noble head above the sparkling foam. If she could not win *his* pity, she would have no others'. She was still an object of admiration to all who saw her, and of envy to not a few who thought they knew her.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—THE SECOND GENERATION.

The years roll on; and save for one bright spot—her boy, who is now at Eton—Gwendoline's firmament is darker than ever. The domestic life of the Luttrells has begun to be commented upon: it is notorious that his Lordship is the slave of a certain female leader of fashion, and her Ladyship must therefore needs receive her share of the world's intolerable pity. They are at their town-house; and though Gwendoline's 'at-homes' are numerous, the word home is a sad misnomer. Her

husband and herself are but rarely seen together in public, and never meet alone save on momentous occasions. One of these has just arisen. It is more serious than the usual applications for money which now alone cause Lord Luttrell to seek the presence of his wife: it is a letter from poor terrified Miss Ferrier, telling of Marion's serious illness, followed by a telegram announcing her death. A touching circumstance attends it. On the morning after the receipt of the last message comes a note from the now dead girl—such miracles can science now perform—begging Gwendoline not to be alarmed; expressing her (the writer's) belief that she is not really so ill as her aunt believes her to be, and begging that her dear step-mother may not be induced to leave London, where she is doubtless enjoying herself so much, upon her account. Thoughtful for others to the last, the poor girl seemed to speak kindness from the very tomb. Gwendoline had no tears to shed, but she was not a little moved by this. Perhaps her long pretended affection for this short-lived, fragile creature had turned to genuine regard; or perhaps the thought that one out of the only two persons of her own sex who really loved her, and upon whose good offices she could count, was gone for ever, produced some selfish sense of desolation; or perhaps (for all that affected her boy affected her) she knew that Spencer would weep to hear such news. But, at all events, she regretted Marion's death. To Lord Luttrell the affair presented another aspect. The leader of fashion had snubbed him for a day or two, and he was not so polite as usual to his wife in consequence.

'Well,' said he petulantly, 'I hope the other one's life is a better one, or I shall have made a bad bargain after all.'

The remark, under the circumstances, was sufficiently brutal in itself; but the misfortune of the possession of good manners in those who are mere scoundrels at bottom is that, when the polish *does* rub off, the true substance appears all the more objectionable. A King Charles' spaniel with the mange is one of the most unpleasing spectacles. It struck Gwendoline for the first time that she had married a ruffian. For the first time also she found herself thinking moodily of the old man who had loved her so dearly, and had made provision for her against this very contingency which had just happened, so that her circumstances were none the worse for it. From his lips there had never fallen one severe word, far less a selfish or a cruel one; and yet she did not deceive herself even now; she well remembered that she had always hated him, and had shuddered with a deadlier chill on the day she married than even on that terrible morning when she saw him lying white and dead. But this reflection did not soften her towards Piers. Henceforth, she resolutely determined to try another plan with him; and the next time she saw him in private—upon a matter of finance—she put it into execution. It was one of those periods at which she received the sum for the maintenance of her step-children—now reduced to one—and he had come according to custom to draw his lion's share of the spoil.

'No, Luttrell,' answered she to his application (he was no longer 'Piers' with her now); 'this money is not mine to give. It was not intended to be spent upon me; certainly not upon you, and least of all upon those on whom you would

squander it. You shall no longer have one penny of it—unless you mend your ways.'

It was curious that though her sense of his abuse of the gift in question had been so keen, she had never before thought of this obvious method of reprisal, which had been always in her power, since the allowance could only be obtained by her own signature. Perhaps her pride had refused to hint at how the money was spent; perhaps it had not stooped to so commonplace a revenge; but at all events so it was.

'Oh,' replied he with a cold sneer, 'that is your plan, is it? You have failed to carry the citadel by assault; so now you mean to starve out the garrison.'

'I mean to try,' said Gwendoline grimly.

'Very good, madam;' and it seemed strange to her how that handsome face of his could wear such an ugly look: 'we shall see. Hitherto, if I have pleased myself, I have done so with some discretion, and with a due regard to your position as my wife.'

'You have been most considerate, I am sure,' said she; and her look of cold contempt was more scornful even than her words.

'You fool,' cried he in a fury, 'you don't know whom you are defying. I have some popularity, madam, and a good deal would be forgiven me in way of what you call "outrage;" but I shall test the charity of our friends to the utmost. I will do such things as shall make you blush through your rouge. Because you are not liked, you fancy, forsooth, that you are respected! Well, I will so insult you before society—before the world—that respect for you shall be no longer possible, but must needs give place to contemptuous pity.'

He saw her shudder, in spite of all her efforts to remain unmoved.

'Yes,' sneered he; 'you have, unfortunately for yourself, a certain foolish pride, which makes you quite unfit to contend with one like me, who have no such weakness. Since you are thus weighted, the struggle, believe me, is unequal. Be warned in time; you will not only be beaten, but you will suffer in the contest itself. Your challenge is as idle (if you will forgive me the ungallantry of the metaphor) as though one of our old crazy wooden ships should pit herself against an ironclad.'

'You are indeed as the thing to which you liken yourself, sir; and not only impervious as to your thick skin: your very heart is iron.'

'Possibly, madam; may be, since it is the iron which makes such ships so dear; that is why I am so expensive. I own I spend a good deal of money: a man in my position can scarcely do otherwise in this country.'

'Then you had better try living abroad; you have been used to do that—cheaply.'

'Perhaps I may, madam; but in that case you may be sure of one thing—I shall take Spencer with me.'

Gwendoline broke down under that dreadful threat. She could not afford to part with her boy, and far less intrust him to such a tutor. But something else broke down at the same time—the last link that had yet bound her to her husband. He conquered; but his victory cost him the relics of her love. They were henceforth dissevered and apart. Let him beware lest they should become not only alien, but antagonistic. Let him look to it, lest, having lost her love, a

worse thing should befall him: he might earn her hate. There is none but herself who knows how dangerous that hate can be.

In the meantime she surrendered at discretion as to the money; and leaving her husband to enjoy himself after his own fashion in town, she withdrew herself to Glen Druid, to which Miss Ferrier and Edith were about to pay their visit, and whither Spencer was coming from Eton. To the content of both, husband and wife did not meet again for a considerable time.

Glen Druid is comparatively unchanged since the day when first we were invited thither. There are no trees, to be called such, in these parts, to grow and broaden, and the rock-bound coast is well nigh as changeless as the eternal sea. If improvement had been needed in the house itself—which it could scarcely be, so beautiful had been poor Giulia's home—Gwendoline had had no money to spare for such a purpose; and the place was just as it was. Spencer, who was very fond of it—delighting, boy-like, in the pleasures of the country, and hating the town—would sometimes interrogate his mother about Glen Druid in Mr Ferrier's time, and unwittingly reopen many a wound. Especially he would ask questions about Eady's father. For although the place was much the same, the tenants had altered. Eady had grown up to be an exquisitely beautiful young woman; and Spencer himself was so well grown and forward that you might have almost thought him to be a man. He had sincerely mourned for Marion; but of Eady, who was more of an age with him, he was passionately fond.

As a general rule, boys, until they reach the age of hobbledohoyism, are quite indifferent to girls. They despise them, and are uncomfortable in their society; but it was not so with the young Etonian. With such parents, it was only to be expected that he should have no *mauvaise honte*, and his natural disposition was as tender and affectionate as it was spirited. Eady was fond of the bright lad, as those of her sex and age are wont to be sometimes of their young brothers; but with Spencer a different sort of fondness was growing up within him than that which is the portion of a sister. As they strolled together with her arm round his neck, or her hand placed lovingly upon his sunny hair, she did not know what grave delight she gave him, or how he treasured up every word, and smile, and touch. That walk around the Warrior's Helm, which has already been the scene of at least one honest courtship, and of one misplaced passion, was now trodden by a pair quite different from either of those couples with whom we have been acquainted. In this case, the passion—the courtship—if the fond dream of youth can be so termed, was all upon one side; the love was common to both. They would have laid down their lives for one another—these two—but from not quite the same motive. Their affection on both sides was disinterested, but (as usual) less unselfish on the side of the male. It never entered into Edith's heart that this Eton boy of sixteen, who had come home for the holidays with such joy again and again, because he passed them all in her sweet company, could be 'thinking seriously' of a young woman of near twenty years of age. The same reason prevented others from seeing anything in Spencer's behaviour towards Edith which their long and affectionate intercourse did not account

for. It was witnessed only by those who had seen them children together, and when the one had always played the part of elder sister, amusement-provider, and protectress to the other. Even Gwendoline was blind to the true state of affairs, though from a very different cause. It seemed to her, *knowing what she did*, not only that a union between her son and Edith Ferrier was unnatural and impossible, but that the very idea must also be so. As in times past with Lord Luttrell, she had credited her son with a knowledge that he did not possess, and notwithstanding that she shuddered at the bare notion of his possessing it, because it monopolised her whole being, because she thought of it whenever she was compelled to think—that is, in every unoccupied and solitary moment by day, and dreamed of it in her drugged sleep by night.

There was only one person in whom even a suspicion of the course which Spencer's affections were taking had arisen. Susan Barland—whose Samuel had been long snatched away from his healing arts by vengeful Death, and who was herself a more than middle-aged woman—perceived, or thought she perceived, that Miss Eady's old playmate was growing fast into her lover, and the idea filled her with repugnance and vague horror. Even she had been won over by the lad's honest ways, and just and kindly behaviour towards herself, as well (when there could not have been danger in it) by his devotion to her beloved Eady; but she had never forgotten that he was Gwendoline's son; and now that this fatal attachment was springing up, that recollection went nigh to freeze her blood. In her own heart of hearts, she had always been convinced that there had been foul play with respect to her old master's death, and she was not one to give up an opinion because it was not shared by others, or loose her hold of it through lapse of time. Moreover, though she never directly breathed a word of so grave a charge, she had now one to whom she could speak of Gwendoline's shortcomings and backslidings, and be sure of sympathy. Miss Ferrier, though full of years and infirmities, and very deaf, had still willing ears for talk of that sort. No pains were now taken by Gwendoline to keep her in good humour. She liked nothing better—so limited had the poor old lady's range of pleasures become—than, closeted with Susan in her own apartment at Glen Druid, to hear her relieve her mind, over a dish of tea, with scandal against Lady Luttrell. Again and again did the persistent widow go back upon the old story of her dead mistress, and descant upon how queer it was that Dr Gisborne had been so submissive to Miss Treherne in concealing Giulia's danger; how strange it was, too, about the medicine and that; and again how shameless it was in Mrs Ferrier to write to Mr Mostyn, as was, before her own poor husband was cold. Through this edifying gossip, added to the want of 'attention' paid to her in the house, where formerly she had been made so much of, all Miss Ferrier's ancient dislike to Gwendoline was revived, as well as a sort of terror of her created, which she was unable in her feeble state to conceal. Her sister-in-law easily perceived it, and also the source from which it came, but only with bitter scorn. She smiled at her own folly in ever having entertained an apprehension of such contemptible antagonists as this dotting spinster and her tattling hanger-on. Her wretchedness was

far too sublime to be affected by such a trumpety annoyance. Nor, indeed, so far as one of the two offenders was concerned, did it last long; for Miss Ferrier, who had been long ailing, at last succumbed to one or the other of her numerous ailments, and died.

The event was of little consequence to Gwendoline, and certainly caused her not half the annoyance with which, about the same time, she learned that her husband was coming to Glen Druid. They had been absent from one another—save for a few brief meetings—for so very long, that the report had got abroad that they were separated. This rumour, or even the fact itself, would have affected neither of them, but the leader of fashion, to whom my Lord was still 'devoted' after his manner, had, it seemed, been outraged by the scandal that it was on her account that the Luttrells had quarrelled; she would not, she said, permit such an infamous falsehood to bear even that colour of truth which his Lordship's absence from his home might impart to it, and she imperiously ordered him down to Glen Druid. In the best society, there is no such thing as a hen-pecked husband, but though it is not the wives who are the tyrants, there is, nevertheless, a good deal of female tyranny. Lord Luttrell obeyed at once, though, indeed, there was another reason for seeking his wife's presence. He had lost frightful sums in gambling, and was threatened with ruin and dishonour. Without knowing either of the reasons which produced his visit—and certain only that they had nothing to do with regard for herself—Gwendoline awaited his arrival with gloom and bitterness.

SKY RAILWAYS.

If Mr Hodgson's plans respecting overhead tramways should be carried out, we may some day see heavy loads dancing along above us, suspended from above, instead of supported underneath. Indeed, if we go on much longer at our present rate, some such aid will be very necessary. Our regular railways—the costly works on which locomotives run—are cutting up more and more fields every year, intersecting more and more our busy towns and cities, dislocating more and more our roads and streets, and jostling more and more our gas-pipes, water-pipes, and sewers underground. The balloonists, it is true, have failed to establish a passenger traffic over our heads; but, in a humbler way, at a low rate of speed, with loads of inert merchandise instead of living men, and with occasional support from the earth on upright poles—why should there not be some kind of line, rail, tramway, rope, or chain overhead, along which burdens may be conveyed?

Uncivilised or half-civilised people have effected something of the kind ages ago. Many a river, or narrow valley, or ravine has had a rope stretched over it, by means of which loads could be carried across; and now that wire-rope presents so many advantages over hempen cord, such contrivances are becoming more and more useful and available. They are managed in various ways. In one form, there is a single rope stretched with a slight incline, so as to enable a sack or basket suspended from a pulley to run by its own descensive force from the loading-point to the terminus; in

this case, hand-hauling, or other kind of power, is not necessary to draw in the reverse direction, seeing that the bag or basket is sent on with its contents to market or to its destination. In another plan, there are two parallel ropes, both inclining from one end to the other; a box is hung upon each rope; the descent of one box is made to draw up the other by means of a light rope passing round a drum at the head of the incline. Any one who has seen mining operations on the slope of a hill will easily understand this arrangement, making allowance for the fact, that in one case the boxes rest on a tramway, whereas in the other they are suspended from a rope. In a third plan, suitable when the two ropes are horizontal instead of inclined, the light subsidiary rope is carried round the entire circuit, and is driven by manual or other power applied to the drum at the extremity; there is here no descensive force due to gravity. In a fourth plan, the two parallel ropes are attached to the ends of a swing-beam, so that they can be alternately raised and lowered—each in turn becoming an ascending and then a descending rope; the loaded box on each runs backwards and forwards by the difference of level thus obtained. If we are right in our 'Court Intelligence,' the domestics at Abergeldie Castle have occasionally made use of some such contrivances as those, to draw over baskets of provisions and other market commodities to the castle—thereby saving a wide detour to a bridge which crosses the Dee at some distance.

But in all the humbler attempts of this kind, the distance is short, so as to avoid the necessity of having any intermediate support for the rope. Once let there be such a support needed, and it will be a puzzle to know how to manage the matter, seeing that the load, when suspended, would naturally find the pole or support an obstruction to free passage. Mr Hodgson, when he took up this matter two or three years ago, at once saw that until this particular difficulty is surmounted, no great extension of the system could be made. The problem has been solved, however, by an arrangement of mechanism which need not be described here, further than by stating that the load is made to hang down on one side of the support. It was also necessary so to arrange that there should be a subdivision of the load, in order that an even distribution might be made, and consequently a light rope rendered available where a thicker one would else be needed. Moreover, as hand-haulage is out of the question in these high-pressure days of ours, means were to be devised for the ready application of steam or water power to move the loads. Then, again, the keeping up of a system of continuous or successive despatch and arrival of loads; the accommodating of the route to sharp curves and considerable gradients of ascending and descending incline; and a triumph over all sort of irregularities in the surface of the country—all would be necessary to the application of the system over distances measured by miles instead of yards.

The difficulties have been pretty nearly surmounted; and there are now several short lines of 'wire tramway,' as it is called, at work. The system ought perhaps to have an additional word, such as *aerial*, or *suspension*, or *overhead*, to denote its peculiar characteristics; but let that pass. The *modus operandi* may be thus described. There is an endless wire-rope, in two lines, which (in railway

language) may be called the up-line and the down-line. The rope is supported on a series of pulleys, carried by substantial posts, the intervals whereof may vary from a few feet to a thousand feet, according to the nature of the country, but which are usually about two hundred feet. There is a drum at one end, the loading end, of the line, around which the rope is wound; and steam or water power is employed to give any desired velocity to the rotation; in practice, a velocity which drags the rope five or six miles an hour is generally deemed sufficient. The boxes are made of various sizes and degrees of substantiality, to receive loads varying from a hundredweight to a quarter of a ton each. Without hanging too closely together on the rope, two hundred of these boxes may be easily despatched in an hour: each forming a kind of tiny railway-train by itself. Each box is suspended from the rope by a pendant of peculiar shape, which at once keeps it steady on its travels, and at the same time enables it to pass without hindrance or obstruction the supporting posts and pulleys. At the arrival end of the line there is a miniature railway, so placed as to receive two small wheels with which each box is provided, and thus to pass on the box to its destination. According as each end becomes a receiving terminus in turn, so is this little bit of railway provided at each end. As the rope continues to work on, the box shunts to the rail, runs any distance or anywhere, delivers its load, travels back, and shunts to the return rope to fetch another load. Inclines as steep as one in six (compared with which, Fell's Mont Cenis Railway may almost be called a level line) have been surmounted; while curves of exceedingly sharp radius may be managed. Of course the line of rope itself is not a curve—it is a succession of straight lines; but these lines may turn off in various degrees of angle at the supporting posts. For considerable distances, steam or water power is of course required; but there are many circumstances under which horse-power will suffice to rotate the drum and drag the rope. Where the general level of the line declines in the direction in which the principal loads are to be carried, very little moving-power will be needed; and if the incline be steep, the line will almost work itself.

There are now several short lines of this singular overhead tramway at work, and others in course of construction. One, opened last year, is at Messrs Ellis and Everard's granite quarry in Leicestershire. It is only three miles long, but it very well illustrates the kind of service which the system is fitted to render. It conveys granite from the quarry to the nearest railway station. The arrangement, when seen from a distance, has a good deal the appearance of an electric telegraph; but the posts are higher and stouter, and the wire-rope is much thicker than the single wires of a telegraph. A portable steam-engine, such as is used by well-to-do farmers for agricultural purposes, drives or rather draws the rope at a speed of about five miles an hour. The boxes hold a hundredweight of stone each, and follow one another merrily along the rope. The full boxes travel along one length or line of the rope; the empty boxes return along the other length; and all of them deftly keep clear of the supporting posts, in virtue of the peculiar and ingenious mode of suspension. And so the loads travel on from Bardon Hill

Quarry to the nearest railway station. The quarry owners used to employ a large number of horses, vehicles, and men to manage the transport; but now the Wire Tramway Company, who are working Mr Hodgson's system, do the labour at the rate of thirty thousand tons of stone per annum. The supporting posts are a hundred and fifty feet apart, except one bold span of six hundred feet across a difficult bit of country. The wire-rope is only half an inch thick, and yet it will bear upwards of a hundred laden boxes hanging to it at once, all at different stages of advance between the starting-point and the terminus.

It will at once be seen what kind of service this very cheap system is *not* fitted to render; and Mr Beale, who has described the whole affair on the part of the Company (or perhaps Mr Hodgson himself), states the limits very fairly. In the first place, where there is sufficient traffic of any kind to support an ordinary main line of railway, such railway would be the best and cheapest in the end. In the next place, where there is a certainty that there would be a heavy local traffic (say a thousand tons per day) over a level country, a branch railway connected with a main line would pay better than a wire tramway. And, in the third place, where water-carriage exists, or is easily obtainable, it is cheaper than either the rail or the tram, if speed be not an object.

On the other hand, the conditions are very numerous and diversified in which the aerial line is fitted to render good service. Where mines are situated in a difficult country, the ropes can be taken from the shaft-head to the point of delivery over any and every kind of ground, without earth-works, bridges, or other permanent constructions, and can be driven by the moving-power employed at the mine itself, whether steam or water. Where coal has to be transmitted from the pit's mouth to a railway or a river staith, or into the yards of gas and water works, the wire-rope will often render peculiar facilities, owing to the ease of placing it at any height from the ground—a very few feet, or a great many yards. Where slates have to be carried from the quarry to the quay, say, from the magnificent Penrhyn Quarries to Bangor, or from Llanberris to Caernarvon, the wire-tram is serviceable in this way—that the ease and gentleness of the motion save the slates from much breakage. Where bricks, clay, and stone have to be removed from fields, and quarries, and pits, there is considerable advantage in the ease with which the line of wire-rope can be made to follow any direction, whether the district be level or hilly. Where farming-produce, as well as lime and manures, is to be conveyed a certain distance in large quantities, the steam-engine at the farmstead may be made to do a very appreciable amount of extra work, by driving the drum and pulleys, the rope and boxes, of a suspended tramway. Where deals, battens, sleepers, or firewood are to be carried to or from shipping, the system promises to be very handy; though whole trees, and large logs or planks, of course cannot be so conveyed. Where goods are to be landed from vessels in a harbour or roadstead, or shipped from land, a wire tramway will often act as a very cheap substitute for a permanent pier and a system of lighters.

Mr Hodgson has more particularly in view the requirements of the colonies and newly opened

countries. It has been pretty clearly ascertained that a wire tramway can be constructed, on level country, at one-fourth of the outlay necessary to make a tolerably good road, and one-tenth the cost of a regular railway; while, if the country be rugged and hilly, the cost of the tramway is not augmented in any very great degree. In the West Indies and Mauritius, the sugar plantations are often ill supplied with roads, while the quantity of cane to be transported to the mill is immense compared with that of the sugar obtained from it; here is another opening for the wire-tram. In plantations of another kind, where 'yellow gals,' as we are told on competent authority, may be seen 'pickin' cotton in de fiel,' heavy loads of cotton are to be sent off at a certain season of the year; and it is advantageous to have some kind of transport-power so simple as not to 'eat its head off' in interest on sunk capital at all other parts of the year. Then, again, there are the coffee plantations; these are usually in hilly districts, where there is special need of a mode of conveyance practically independent of surface irregularities; the aggregate produce of a coffee district is now often conveyed to market or to port in a way both slow and expensive, greatly in need of such amelioration. So singularly does the system adapt itself to varying circumstances, that it is contemplated at Buenos Ayres to drive a row of piles into the great river La Plata to a distance of five miles from the shore, and to establish a wire-rope system on the top of them, for the conveyance of merchandise between ships and the shore.

Herapath's Railway Journal 'would not be surprised to see passengers carried by these means when the system is more developed, and sufficient experience has been obtained as to the safety of this mode of transit: by the exercise of a little ingenuity, cars capable of accommodating two persons might be easily constructed.' But we can afford to wait. When we find that five miles of line, to carry two hundred tons a day, with boxes, posts, pulleys, wire-rope, and steam-power all complete, can be made and set to work for less than seven hundred pounds per mile, and when we compare this with the seven thousand—nay, seventy thousand—per mile for a railway, we cannot but think that the half-inch wire-rope has a very useful future before it.

A MARINE RESIDENCE.

IN SIXTEEN CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

'WHAT do you say to Boddlecombe Bay?' was my sister-in-law's first greeting, one August afternoon, as I entered her drawing-room in Cadogan Place.

Her question sounded more like a riddle, or a nursery rhyme, than a serious inquiry, but I understood at once what she meant. The fact was I had promised to take Clementina and her 'dear girls' wherever they pleased, that autumn, for a month's holiday; and during the whole summer, they had been agitated with divers plans and projects. I had left the matter entirely in their own hands; for any place that is not 'Pall Mall is equally objectionable to me at all times. I am too old, and I hope I may add too wise, not to know where life is made most comfortable; but a bachelor uncle has his duties, if he has no privilege, and once a year I sacrifice myself to my relatives.

Clementina and the girls thought I was a 'good-natured creature,' not to insist upon Brighton or Scarborough; but any place of so-called agreeable resort is, after all, only a miserable imitation of what one leaves behind one in town; and when one does do an unselfish thing, it is just as well to do it thoroughly.

The 'dear girls' it may be thought would have proposed a gay locality; but Kate was of a romantic turn of mind; and Eva (who was nine-and-twenty) had drawn most of the better-known watering-places blank for many Augusts (which is the husband-hunting season), and began to think that her best chance of finding one must lie in a more retired spot. She had evinced High Church tendencies of late years, and darkly hinted at becoming what she called 'the bride of Heaven' in some sisterhood; but Clementina, who was a woman of excellent common-sense, had instantly rejoined: 'Stuff and nonsense, Eva; you are much too fond of dancing and croquet, to enter any such sober institution—unless it's in the Isle of Man.'

And, for my own part, I have noticed that Protestant ladies in England do not, as a rule, become the brides of Heaven until a period of life which is considered late for ordinary wedlock. However, that remark is only between me and the reader: I never interfere with my sister-in-law and her girls in any way, not even during that one month in the year when I give them the use of my cheque-book, and I don't think that Uncle John is less popular with them for his non-intervention principles.

'Boddlecombe Bay!' replied I: 'by all means, my dear, let it be Boddlecombe Bay—only, where is it?'

'Uncle John would go to *Botany* Bay, if we wished it, mamma,' said Eva smiling; 'since, away from Piccadilly, all places are places of transportation to him.'

'That is so far true, that wherever I go with you, my dears, I am always transported with pleasure,' remarked I; whereupon both Kate and Eva kissed me. I am fond of my nieces; and now that I am over fifty, very bald, and not at all likely to be kissed except by those connected by near ties of consanguinity, their caresses are very agreeable. I even sometimes flatter myself that it is not solely from the sense of favours to come that they seem so grateful to me for any pleasure that I am able to provide for them; and that even Clementina is not always speculating (as Codgers of our club insists that she is) upon 'how I shall cut up.' They are, at all events, well aware they will have whatever I have to leave; and though I have taken them an autumn trip for ten years running, and been of course entirely dependent upon them for my provisions, they have not poisoned me yet.

'But you have not answered my question, Clementina: where is Boddlecombe Bay?' reiterated I.

'Well, the fact is, my dear John,' replied my sister-in-law with some hesitation, 'we have been looking for it all this morning; and we can't find it.'

'No,' said Eva; 'it's not in any of our maps. We sent to borrow the last Atlas of the Frippes—and Frank is so absurd, he sent back an Ancient Geography and a Celestial Globe. But we know *whereabouts* the place is quite well. It's—Dear me, what did the Levanters say about it, Kate?'

'Oh, it's a most lovely place, uncle!' cried Kate in a rapture: 'all rocks and sands, and

caverns and precipices—the most charming sea-side spot in England.

'Oh, it's in England, is it?' said I. 'Well, that's something. Is it near—mind, I don't care twopence about it—but does it chance to be within easy reach of town?'

'Well, no, John,' answered Clementina; 'I am afraid it is not quite *that*. As far as I can make out by this stupid guide-book, it lies somewhere between Bude'—

'Bude!' exclaimed Kate; 'oh, I've heard of Bude! Bude Lights! How charming that will be, to see their rainbow tints flashing out upon the solemn midnight sea!'

'Not a bit better than the colours from the chemists' shops in Piccadilly,' said I; 'and nothing to be got behind them besides. But never mind. We are to go to Bude, are we?'

'O dear, no, Uncle John. It's not a town at all; it's a charming little primitive village; so delightful in its beautiful simplicity, that you will never be able to tear yourself away from it.'

I nodded, in polite adhesion to the view, but in my own mind I thought I should have strength of purpose sufficient to return to Pall Mall.

'There are shells, Uncle John,' continued Kate, 'at Boddlecombe equal to any at Tenby'—

'And such lobsters!' interpolated Eva roughly, for she knows my weakness, and how dreadfully they disagree with me.

'Then the sunsets, Uncle John, are perfectly splendid, the Levanters say; while the sky in the daytime is without a cloud.'

'I should like to have seen how the Levanters looked when they were not under a cloud,' remarked I quietly. 'They are rather queer people to give one advice as to where to spend one's autumn; and, by-the-bye, if they found this place so delightful, how is it they don't go back to it themselves?'

'Well, you know, Mr Levanter never does go to the same place twice, John,' said Clementina. 'But he assures us that Boddlecombe is a most fascinating spot, and so retired.'

'And with such *exquisite* coves, Uncle John!' cried Kate, clasping her hands.

'Yes, it's somewhere between Bude and the Land's End,' said Clementina, looking up confidently from her geographical researches. 'You can read here all about it for yourself; and she put into my hands a heap of guide-books.'

'All about it,' was certainly not much. Without wishing to expose myself to an action for libel, I should say that the gentlemen who had written their views of Boddlecombe had done so at second-hand, and pocketed the money allowed them for travelling expenses by the publisher. 'This place should be seen rather than described,' wrote one.

'Words fail us to paint the splendours of this enchanting spot,' wrote another; while a third contented himself with this condensed description: 'Boddlecombe; fine'—leaving the reader in a state of uncertainty as to whether he referred to the scenery or the weather.

'Is Boddlecombe on the railway, Clementina?'

'No, John; it is not *exactly* on the line. Marjoram Gate is the station. We shall have to drive a little way, I expect. I meant to ask Mrs Levanter how far, but it quite slipped my memory, and they started for Boulogne this morning. She told me, however, that we should never repent having taken so long a journey.'

'All right, my dear. Then you had better write at once to the local agent about a house.'

So Clementina wrote by that day's post, and we received a most satisfactory reply. We had been most fortunate, it seemed, in our application, for the principal proprietor of the place had suddenly made up his mind to let his mansion, the 'Look-out;' and we might have that at once; but otherwise, lodgings were scarce, and their accommodation rather limited.

I had my last dinner at the club, which I took care should be a good one (for though I have often eaten at the sea-side, I have *never dined*), played my last rubber for crowns and pounds, drank my last cup of coffee in the smoking-room, shook hands with Codgers and some other lucky dogs who stay in town all the year round—when the club closes, using another as though it were their own—and was punctual to my time at the Paddington Station. There I found Clementina and the 'dear girls,' with Foljambe, their own maid, without whom the latter never move, and whom I believe they expect to take with them to Paradise, or rather that she will precede them there 'to get everything ready.' She is a maiden of six-and-thirty, of the most distinguished appearance and elegant manners, but perhaps just a little affected. The proper way, she affirms, of spelling her name is with two little *ff*—ffoljambe—but to this Clementina will not consent. In all other respects, this confidential attendant has entirely her own way. She travelled with us in the same carriage, of course, and was the first to observe that the spring-blinds were not made of the sort of silk which one is accustomed to see when one travels. If she had only known what sort of place we were bound for, she would not have been so particular. Poor ff-ff-ffoljambe!

CHAPTER II.

We had not been long in the carriage, when I perceived that, though the dear girls were in the highest spirits, something was upon Clementina's mind. She took out a letter, and read it once or twice, made a spill of it, as though she was about to light a cigar, then didn't, but read it again.

'I hope, my dear sister,' said I smiling, 'that is not a dun?'

'No, John,' said she; 'thanks to *somebody*, we have no duns; but it is something that distresses me—because it is upon *your* account—almost as much as though it were a dun. It is from that stupid agent at Boddlecombe.'

'La, mamma!' cried the two girls in chorus, 'why did you not tell us? What is the matter?'

'Well, nothing *may* be the matter, my dears, and therefore I did not think it worth while to speak about it; but perhaps we had better be prepared for the worst. The fact is, we can't have 'the Lookout.'

'Dear, dear!' cried the girls.

'Alas, alas!' exclaimed Foljambe.

'Why not?' inquired I angrily. 'What the deuce does the fellow mean?'

'Well, it is not his fault, John. He says Mr Bunting, the great proprietor of the place, is so very changeable, and has altered his mind, and won't leave—'circumstances having occurred over which he has no control.' But we can have the agent's own house, it seems, No. 1 Bellevue Terrace, if the accommodation is found sufficient.'

'And if not?'

'Well, there is no other house to be got, he says.' The disappointment exhibited in my nieces' faces would perhaps have touched me, but for the blank despair which settled upon Foljambe's; she opened her mouth, and threw her head back so exactly as though she were swallowing a pill, that I burst into a shout of laughter.

'It is so good of you, John, to take everything so good-naturedly,' said Clementina; 'but I am afraid you will not be made so comfortable as I could wish.'

'Pooh, pooh!' returned I; 'never mind me; and, besides, we can but go to the hotel after all. There is an hotel, I suppose?'

'O dear, yes,' said Clementina, brightening up again; 'there is a nice little hotel, Mr Levanter said. That is where the Caviars are coming to to-morrow: they have already secured rooms there for a month.'

'You don't mean to say that Sir Charles is going to bring his people to Boddlecombe?' exclaimed I.

'Yes, they are. I knew it would be a pleasant surprise to you; but the fact is they called upon us a week ago, and seemed so uncertain about their plans for the autumn—Lady Caviar was for Como, and Edith for Egypt—that I persuaded them all to come to Cornwall instead. Of course, the girls and I were delighted to have their society, but I really contrived it chiefly on your account, John. I thought Boddlecombe would be so dull for you: and though Sir Charles would not be much of a walking companion, because of his gout, you might like to have him to play *écarté* with, or what not: a man always wants another man to keep him company.'

'That was most kind of you, Clementina. But I am afraid that Boddlecombe is not quite the sort of residence to suit Sir Charles, eh? No ice to be got for his sherry and Seltzer, for instance; and, I daresay, not a leg-rest in the whole place.'

'That will do him good,' said Clementina firmly; 'he ought not to be so coddled and spoiled; it will do him all the good in the world.'

'Very likely, my dear. But I hope you did not recommend him the place upon your own responsibility; that you were particular to say we were taking it upon trust from the Levanters?'

'Well, I don't know as to that. Kate convinced Edith, and Edith persuaded her mother; and, of course, at an hotel one can get everything—no matter where it is.'

I assented to this by a motion of my head; but my mind misgave me very considerably. My friend Caviar was about the most particular man within ten square miles of Eaton Crescent; and if, through any misrepresentations of me or mine, he should be brought three hundred miles from town, to a place unprovided with the ice of Wenham Lake, I felt that I might lose for ever a friend who kept a most excellent cook, and a chest of such regalias as I should not find elsewhere. At my time of life, friendships—of such genuine value at least—are not easily made.

Of course we had to 'break the journey;' nobody but a commercial traveller ever went to Marjoram Gate from Paddington in a day; and such folks must be of iron frames. So far as Exeter, all is well; but after that, civilisation ceases, so far as locomotion is concerned, and the train creeps like a stage wagon, calling (though for nobody in particular, and certainly not for the general public)

at every station. After Plymouth, matters become much worse; the rate of travel lapses to that of the middle ages; we crawl and are always waiting for the up-train. Of course we did not expect to receive any information respecting our place of destination until we arrived in this outlandish district, nor in that were we disappointed. Some of the more courteous of our fellow-travellers—all of whom were subjected to Clementina's inquiries upon this vital point—would affect to have 'known people speak' in high terms of Boddlecombe; but it was plain that they had never heard its name. One very gentlemanlike person (to whom the ladies all grew warmly attached) averred, indeed, that he knew it well—had spent a whole summer there, and never was better pleased in his life. But it turned out, after all, that he was thinking of Babbicombe; and the alteration in the manner of Clementina and the dear girls towards him when that mistake was discovered was so exceedingly well defined, that I do believe the poor wretch got out at a station short of that which he intended.

On the afternoon of the second day, however (to quote the diaries of distant travel), we fell in with an intelligent native, who had been got hold of, I suppose, by enterprising missionaries in early life, for he had been to a public school and to Oxford. Even he, however, had not been to Boddlecombe; but he knew a man who had—a university tutor, who had taken some pupils there for a long vacation, but had only stopped a month.

'Why so?' inquired Clementina, with great interest. 'I suppose it was rather dull?'

'Well, they did find it rather dull,' returned he; 'but that was not the reason of their departure. I daresay it is all altered *now*, you know; but the fact is they were starved out—they got nothing to eat.'

Foljambe groaned.

'All you collegians are so particular,' said Clementina smiling; 'of course you mean no delicacies?'

'Well, madam,' said the native, 'if you call meat a delicacy, I do mean that. But the truth is they had neither beef nor mutton: my friend was met on the high-road leading a sheep (which he purchased at a market-town many miles away) by a cord.'

'It must have been a pet lamb,' cried Kate. 'How touching!'

'My dear madam,' explained the native, 'it was what is called a wether. He had bought it as an article of provision; and when he got it home, which was a matter of infinite difficulty and embarrassment, he didn't know how to turn it into mutton—how to kill it.'

'How horrible!' ejaculated the dear girls.

'How shamefully wicked!' cried Foljambe.

'But how did he kill it?' inquired Clementina, who, as I have before said, is eminently practical, and besides, who perhaps reflected that upon her shoulders would devolve all the responsibility of our housekeeping.

'Well, madam, they persuaded it to drink out of a wash-hand basin, and then held its head under water.'

'Bah!' exclaimed I with horror.

'Just what the sheep said, sir!' pursued the native approvingly. 'But it took out its posthumous revenge in indigestion, besides the less material nightmares and other sufferings which

the stings of conscience inflicted upon the whole party. They heard bleatings in their dreams for years. And yet what *were* they to do, there being no butcher within a radius of ten miles?—And if you come to that, sir, what would *you* have done? You would have found it much more difficult, as well as dangerous, to suffocate an ox.'

'But why did they not eat fish?' inquired Clementina.

'Because there are no fish at Boddlecombe, with the exception of a small creature called 'a bishop,' quite uneatable, and with a poisonous sting in its back, the effects of which are agonising, and, as the local superstition runs, will endure from the time of infliction until the turn of the tide.'

'According to that,' said I contemptuously, for I thought the man was inventing these horrible stories (which were, however, quite true), 'one has only to be stung just before low water, and the pain will last no time.'

'Just so,' assented the native, good humouredly. 'I wish I could suggest to you any other amusement at Boddlecombe.'

And that man also got into disfavour with us all, and was glad when he was let out.

Marjoram Gate was not a place that recommended itself on general grounds. It was not a town, and scarcely even a village; but it had three inns. How this was so, I cannot explain. Why people should come to pass a night at Marjoram, far less a day, is still a mystery to me. It is not situated in a pretty part of the county; not by any means a place which, as Kate expresses it, 'makes one in love with life to look at it'; and perhaps persons who are of a suicidal turn of mind come down here to get their views confirmed. They could not, however, hang themselves upon trees, for there were none. Upon all that long dreary road between Marjoram Gate and Boddlecombe we did not see anything to be called a tree: a single finger-post reared itself about half-way, but the ruthless wind from seaward had chopped both its hands off, and that 'shocking example' seemed to have deterred vegetation. There was nothing beyond four feet high *except* the wind (which was high enough), and our indignation, which grew and grew against the Levanters. Even Kate, who was ready to admire everything, had nothing to say beyond that she had no doubt the scenery would improve as we neared Boddlecombe; but there seemed no chance of our doing that. Kate had perched herself on the box with the driver, and to her Eva appealed in plaintive accents, like Bluebeard's wife on the ground-floor of the tower: 'Sister Kate, Sister Kate, do you see anything of Boddlecombe?' But her reply was always in the negative; she did not even cry: 'I see a flock of sheep.' There were no sheep.

At last there was an enthusiastic clapping of hands as the sight of the sea first burst upon us—the broad, bright blue sea, that stretched right away to the New World, without a foot of land between. Then, as we turned along the coast, bay after bay unfolded itself before us, with the long Atlantic rollers tipped with white, galloping ceaselessly into each like troops of horsemen!

'There is Boddlecombe!' exclaimed the driver, pointing to a few white roofs upon a headland before us.

'You will be sure to put us down in Bellevue Terrace,' observed Clementina, as though the slow-

moving vehicle had been drawn by winged griffins, whose eager flight it required much preparation to subdue. 'You know where it is, don't you?'

'O yes, marm! that'll be right enough. There ain't much choice of terrasses up yonder.'

There was not. Never shall I forget the depressing look of that unaccommodating hamlet, with its one straggling street of one-storied dwellings.

'O my goodness!' cried Clementina, 'this wretched hovel never can be *our* house.'

'This is No. 1 Bellvue, marm,' observed the driver deprecatingly.

'We shall never all get into it!' exclaimed my sister-in-law. She was answering her own sad thoughts; but the man felt called upon to keep up the conversation, I suppose.

'They all sleeps thick upon ground at Boddlecombe,' said he encouragingly, 'though at first some doesn't like it; and this has the name of a clean house.'

'It looks like a place that ought to have a board upon it, with "Licensed to sell Coffee and Snuff,"' ejaculated Eva.

'I only hope we may get coffee or anything else in this terrible spot,' answered her mother with a groan.

We entered by way of the kitchen, and took a survey of this undesirable residence. If crinolines had not happily gone out of fashion, the three ladies could never have got into the little parlour at all. There was a dining-room, still smaller, opposite to it; and above these were a few bedrooms like berths.

'I daresay we shall fit in somehow,' observed hopeful Kate; 'and we shall be all day out of doors.'

'But suppose it should be wet?' sighed Eva; 'what on earth should we do then, Uncle John?'

'I don't know what you would do, my dear,' answered I gloomily; 'but as for me, I should cut my'—

'Hush!' said Clementina; 'that is not like Uncle John. He will, I am sure he will, put the best face upon it possible.'

'Yes, my dear,' answered I, rebuked and humbly; 'I will cut nothing: I will grow my moustaches.'

SUNSET.

WHEN stream and lake of golden light
Among the ranging clouds appear,
And mountain flowers on chalice bright
Reveal the Evening's crystal tear;

Then let me wander all along
The shadowy lawn of wooded hill,
And silent hear the thrush's song
Above the river broad and still.

'Tis peace to see the meadow's peace,
'Tis joy to hail the glow around,
As restless day and trouble cease
On yonder sunset's holy ground.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH. Also sold by all Booksellers.